Discipline Guidelines, inter-alia, provide for penal action against those distributors who indulge in such malpractices. Oil Companies take *necessary action* immediately on receipt of such complaints. Bharat Petroleum Corporation has reported that no such complaint has been received against M/s. Nihal Gas Service by them.

Demand of Natural Gas

8043. SHRI SURESH PACHOURl: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment of the demand for Natural Gas by the end of this century;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the strategy adopted by Government to enable the oil sector to meet this demand for Natural Gas by the turn of this century?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (b) An Expert Group constituted by the Government has projected a demand of 145.56 MMSCMD in 1999-2000 A.D.

(c) Steps taken to increase the supply of natural gas include the additional development of existing fields, development of new fields etc. The Government is also examining the feasibility of importing natural gas.

Auctioning of oilfields

8044. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS bo pleased to state: .....

(a) whether Government propose to auction small oilfields discovered by Public Sector Undertakings like Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited and Oil India Limited; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal, including the number of fields proposed to be auctioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (b) Under the first and second offer for development of fields, 31 and 33 small sized fields respectively were offered to Indian and foreign companies for development. These fields would be developed by the companies on their own with no participation by ONGC/OIL, under production contracts with Govt, of India. The companies would have to pay statutory levies like royalty and cess. Payment for the companies share of oil would be at international prices.

Rules for opening up second gas agency

8045. SHRI J. S. RAJU:

-SHRI MISA R. GANESAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what norms are followed for getting a second gas agency if the population of a place is more than 20,000; and

(b) whether the gas agency is given at Panchayat level, since the Panchayat Raj is put on a high pedestal for local administration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) A second LPG distributorship in a market is set up based on either or both of the following considerations:

1. If the waiting list of the existing distributor is large enough to sustain an independent economically viable second distributorship.